

## § 531.35

are not proper mediums of payment under the Act. They are neither cash nor "other facilities" within the meaning of section 3(m). However, the use of such devices for the purpose of conveniently and accurately measuring wages earned or facilities furnished during a single pay period is not prohibited. Piecework earnings, for example, may be calculated by issuing tokens (representing a fixed amount of work performed) to the employee, which are redeemed at the end of the pay period for cash. The tokens do not discharge the obligation of the employer to pay wages, but they may enable him to determine the amount of cash which is due to the employee. Similarly, board, lodging, or other facilities may be furnished during the pay period in exchange for scrip or coupons issued prior to the end of the pay period. The reasonable cost of furnishing such facilities may be included as part of the wage, since payment is being made not in scrip but in facilities furnished under the requirements of section 3(m). But the employer may not credit himself with "unused scrip" or "coupons outstanding" on the pay day in determining whether he has met the requirements of the Act because such scrip or coupons have not been redeemed for cash or facilities within the pay period. Similarly, the employee cannot be charged with the loss or destruction of scrip or tokens.

### § 531.35 "Free and clear" payment; "kickbacks."

Whether in cash or in facilities, "wages" cannot be considered to have been paid by the employer and received by the employee unless they are paid finally and unconditionally or "free and clear." The wage requirements of the Act will not be met where the employee "kicks-back" directly or indirectly to the employer or to another person for the employer's benefit the whole or part of the wage delivered to the employee. This is true whether the "kick-back" is made in cash or in other than cash. For example, if it is a requirement of the employer that the employee must provide tools of the trade which will be used in or are specifically required for the performance of the employer's particular work,

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there would be a violation of the Act in any workweek when the cost of such tools purchased by the employee cuts into the minimum or overtime wages required to be paid him under the Act. See also in this connection, § 531.32(c).

### PAYMENT WHERE ADDITIONS OR DEDUCTIONS ARE INVOLVED

#### § 531.36 Nonovertime workweeks.

(a) When no overtime is worked by the employees, section 3(m) and this part apply only to the applicable minimum wage for all hours worked. To illustrate, where an employee works 40 hours a week at a cash wage rate of \$1.60 an hour in a situation when that rate is the applicable minimum wage and is paid \$64 in cash free and clear at the end of the workweek, and in addition is furnished facilities valued at \$4, no consideration need be given to the question of whether such facilities meet the requirements of section 3(m) and this part, since the employee has received in cash the applicable minimum wage of \$1.60 an hour for all hours worked. Similarly, where an employee is employed at a rate of \$1.80 an hour and during a particular workweek works 40 hours for which he is paid \$64 in cash, the employer having deducted \$8 from his wages for facilities furnished, whether such deduction meets the requirement of section 3(m) and subpart B of this part need not be considered, since the employee is still receiving, after the deduction has been made, a cash wage of \$1.60 an hour. Deductions for board, lodging, or other facilities may be made in nonovertime workweeks even if they reduce the cash wage below the minimum, provided the prices charged do not exceed the "reasonable cost" of such facilities. When such items are furnished the employee at a profit, the deductions from wages in weeks in which no overtime is worked are considered to be illegal only to the extent that the profit reduces the wage (which includes the "reasonable cost" of the facilities) below the required minimum. Accordingly, in a situation when \$1.60 an hour is the applicable minimum wage, if an employee employed at a rate of \$1.65 an hour works 40 hours in a workweek and is paid only \$54 in cash, \$12 having been

deducted for facilities furnished to him, such facilities must be measured by the requirements of section 3(m) and this part to determine if the employee has received the minimum of \$64 (40 hours × \$1.60) in cash or in facilities which may be legitimately included in "wages" payable under the Act. The same would be true where an employee is furnished the facilities in addition to a cash wage of \$54 for 40 hours of work. In either case, if the "reasonable cost" to the employer of legitimate facilities equals at least \$10 the requirements of the Act are met. Cf. *Southern Pacific Co. v. Joint Council Dining Car Employees*, 165 F. (2d) 26 (C.A. 9).

(b) Deductions for articles such as tools, miners' lamps, dynamite caps, and other items which do not constitute "board, lodging, or other facilities" may likewise be made in nonovertime workweeks if the employee nevertheless received the required minimum wage in cash free and clear; but to the extent that they reduce the wages of the employee in any such workweek below the minimum required by the Act, they are illegal.

#### § 531.37 Overtime workweeks.

(a) Section 7 requires that the employee receive compensation for overtime hours at "a rate of not less than one and one-half times the regular rate at which he is employed." When overtime is worked by an employee who receives the whole or part of his wage in facilities and it becomes necessary to determine the portion of his wages represented by facilities, all such facilities must be measured by the requirements of section 3(m) and subpart B of this part. It is the Administrator's opinion that deductions may be made, however, on the same basis in an overtime workweek as in nonovertime workweeks (see § 531.36), if their purpose and effect are not to evade the overtime requirements of the Act or other law, providing the amount deducted does not exceed the amount which could be deducted if the employee had only worked the maximum number of straight-time hours during the workweek. For example, in a situation where \$1.60 an hour is the applicable minimum wage, if an employee is employed at a rate of \$1.65 an hour (5

cents in excess of the minimum wage) the maximum amount which may be deducted from his wages in a 40-hour workweek for items such as tools, dynamite caps, miners' lamps, or other articles which are not "facilities" within the meaning of the Act, is 40 times 5 cents or \$2 (see § 531.36). Deductions in excess of this amount for such articles are illegal in overtime workweeks as well as in nonovertime workweeks. There is no limit on the amount which may be deducted for "board, lodging, or other facilities" in overtime workweeks (as in workweeks when no overtime is worked), provided that these deductions are made only for the "reasonable cost" of the items furnished. When such items are furnished at a profit, the amount of the profit (plus the full amount of any deductions for articles which are not facilities) may not exceed \$2 in the example heretofore used in this paragraph. These principles assume a situation where bona fide deductions are made for particular items in accordance with the agreement or understanding of the parties. If the situation is solely one of refusal or failure to pay the full amount of wages required by section 7, these principles have no application. Deductions made only in overtime workweeks, or increases in the prices charged for articles or services during overtime workweeks will be scrutinized to determine whether they are manipulations to evade the overtime requirements of the Act.

(b) Where deductions are made from the stipulated wage of an employee, the regular rate of pay is arrived at on the basis of the stipulated wage before any deductions have been made. Where board, lodging, or other facilities are customarily furnished as addition to a cash wage, the reasonable cost of the facilities to the employer must be considered as part of the employee's regular rate of pay. See *Walling v. Alaska Pacific Consolidated Mining Co.*, 152 F. (2d) 812 (C.A. 9), cert. denied, 327 U.S. 803. Thus, suppose an employee employed at a cash rate of \$2 an hour, whose maximum nonovertime workweek under section 7(a) of the Act is 40 hours, works 44 hours during a particular workweek. If, in addition, he is